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Security Information

14 July 1953



MEMORANDUM FOR THE DCI

FROM: DDI

Subject: Critical Comments by Mr. Elliott on Chapter 7 of the Jackson Committee Report.

Yesterday the Planning Board discussed Chapter 7 of the Jackson Committee Report which recommends establishment by the President of an Operations Coordinating Board which among other factors, would replace PSB; and the Planning Board discussed the attached critical comments by Mr. Elliott of Arthur Flemming's office on Chapter 7.

I believe you will want to read these critical comments. Frank Nash was favorably impressed with them. I, too, feel there is merit in Elliott's paper, especially in the four basic rules he lists on page 7.

DDI  
Views

As you may recall the NSC on 2 July referred Chapter 7 to the Bureau of the Budget for preparation of a draft executive order suitable for implementing the recommendations in Chapter 7. Although there can be no question that the Jackson Committee Report contains valuable ideas and suggestions, it seems to me that it would be a great mistake to approve its recommendations and to issue implementing orders and directives until they have received thorough consideration at high levels, and before all pros and cons have been carefully weighed. Only by a thorough consideration of all views are we likely to attain sound, economical, orderly and effective administration and execution of national security policy.

R.A. Jr.

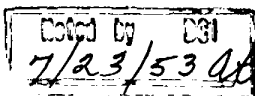
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EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT  
NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL  
WASHINGTON

*Mr. Amory*  
*7/13/53*  
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MEMORANDUM FOR THE NSC PLANNING BOARD

SUBJECT: Report to the President by the President's  
Committee on International Information  
Activities, June 30, 1953

REFERENCES: A. Memo for Planning Board, July 3, 1953  
B. Memo for All Holders of Subject Report,  
July 8, 1953

The enclosed comments by the ODM Member on  
Chapter 7 of the Jackson Committee report are transmitted  
herewith for the information of the Planning Board in con-  
nection with its discussion of the subject at the meeting  
on Monday, July 13.

It is requested that the enclosure be given  
special security handling identical with that given Chapter 7  
of the Jackson Committee report.

S. EVERETT GLEASON  
Acting Executive Secretary

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July 1, 1953

MEMORANDUM FOR DR. ARTHUR S. FLEMMING

FROM William Y. Elliott

SUBJECT The Jackson Committee Report, Chapter 7 --  
Critical Comments

I will not quote the exact language but paraphrase the main points in chapter 7: in effect, what is proposed, is setting up a Board within the National Security Council structure, but apparently not in any way under the Presidential Executive Director for the National Security Council (Special Assistant for National Security Affairs). This Board would be called an Operations Coordinating Board. It would have the broadest possible powers to coordinate the development by the departments and agencies of detailed operational plans to carry out policies approved by the National Security Council. Apparently, this applies to all policies and would include such matters as the petroleum program policy which has just been put into your hands, or the electromagnetic policy, which is also devolved upon the Office of Defense Mobilization, and even areas like continental defense policy. Its functions, in short, would be as broad as the coverage of the Council itself.

It would have the duty of seeing that timely and coordinated execution of plans is achieved, and might initiate new proposals for action within the framework of national security policies as situations changed and new opinions arose.

Finally, it would have the duty of seeing that each project or action is so executed as to make its full contribution to the particular climate of opinion which the United States is seeking to achieve in the world.

This last function is really the clue to the contradictory assumptions and needs which this Board is supposed to rest upon and to meet. As was quite clear from the context, the whole idea arose from trying to supplant the Psychological Strategy Board with something that would better fulfill the

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need for gearing the psychological factor into all the operations of government. Having hit upon the sound, but by no means novel, idea that every policy of government has psychological implications, and that isolating the psychological factor as a single approach tended to overplay it and render the whole concept sterile, the Jackson Committee then proceeded to arrange to have a Board that would control all policies and give some weight to the psychological factor through overseeing their execution.

This becomes much more clear when the representatives who are to be the members of the Operations Coordinating Board are noted. They comprise the Under Secretary of State as Chairman, the Deputy Secretary of Defense, the Deputy Director for Mutual Security, the Director of CIA, and the Special Assistant to the President (for Cold War Planning).

It will be noted that this group, in effect, is the old Psychological Strategy Board, and that it does not have a single member of the President's institutional staff on it, with the exception of the Deputy Director for Mutual Security. Indeed, there is some question today whether the Deputy Director for Mutual Security is more a coordinator than an executive with specific functions, though in Harriman's regime he probably was both. None of the agencies which represent the President in terms of the normal interest in seeing that policies are carried out within the framework of the original intentions and the budgetary limits are represented, such as the Bureau of the Budget in the first and most important instance. The Office of Defense Mobilization, which comprises, by statute and Executive Order, as broad a range of coordinating government policies as any single part of the President's executive staff, is completely ignored. The Treasury Department, which has a normal interest -- and, if I may say so, at the present time a somewhat super-normal interest -- in seeing that policies are executed within the limits of the fiscal feasibility, is not a member, though both the Office of Defense Mobilization and Treasury are members of the National Security Council itself. The whole orientation of the Board is looking outward toward external affairs and the impact of our policies on the climate of opinion in the rest of the world.

It is proposed that, under the chairmanship of the Under Secretary of State, there should also be a person appointed by the President to be the principal Executive Officer of the Board, although he would not be a member in full standing. He would have only the most casual relationship to the Special Assistant to the President for national security affairs, through the liaison which he is instructed to maintain and through the right of the Presidential Assistant to attend Board meetings when and if he has the time. This principal Executive Officer would have a staff of his own which would also be independent of the staff of the National Security Council.

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There are two quite justifiable objectives which underlie this effort. However, the form which has been proposed for implementing them through an Operations Coordinating Board seems to me to miscarry on several counts.

Let us consider the virtues of the proposal first:

1. There is a real need for stiffening up the Psychological Strategy Board and getting it into the stream of operations so that its recommendations can be effective and psychological considerations can be given due weight without giving it an isolated position where it has never proved to be effective. I will turn to this point in my final recommendation.

2. There is a genuine need for more of a follow-up by the National Security Council on behalf of the President than is at present possible through the small, overburdened staff of the Special Assistant to the President, who is Executive Director, and through more or less routine progress reports made often in a very perfunctory manner to the Council and to its Planning Board. The assumption behind the Jackson Committee proposals undoubtedly was that, by lifting the membership of the group to the Under Secretarial level or even higher in some cases, it might be possible to get a real follow-up through the departments, and with the driving leadership of the present Under Secretary of State.

I return also to the suggestion as to accomplishing some of the merits of this proposal in a different way in the recommendations.

Now for the defects of the scheme. The first proposition is the unwisdom of completely separating policy from operations to the degree that is contemplated. Policy, after all, ought to grow, in considerable measure, out of operations, and operations, on their part, cannot be effectively planned, or coordinated, or adjusted, or timed, or anything else by people who have not taken part in the detailed considerations of these very factors of feasibility and implementation which must go into the responsible formulation of policy. To think of the Planning Board and the National Security Council proper as bodies which somehow establish a broad general frame of reference upon the skeleton of which policies are then to be clothed with flesh and blood by an entire different set of people, creates two dangers. The first is that the operations of the Planning Board and the National Security Council in framing policy directives will be even more general and unrealistic than at times they have been in the past. There is a very strong danger that the whole time

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of this part of the National Security Council would be consumed in finding acceptable formulae and in working out general language broad enough to fit both conflicts of interest and a very wide range of specific variations. The great virtue of the recent developments of the Planning Board and the National Security Council lie in taking the opposite tack, which I think our own petroleum report well illustrated: in effect, this is to come down to cases and to get policies that are meaningful in terms of action programs.

In short, it would be very easy for the Council and its Planning Board to lapse into semantics and exercises in elegant language and draftsmanship which would have very little relevance to the settlement of real issues or to guidance for action decisions. This tendency, which always exists, would certainly be increased if the follow-up on action programs were in completely different hands and it were not the responsibility to see that something gets done, as at the present time we try to assure in your own organization by seeing that the appropriate people take the appropriate actions -- we, i.e., your NSC staff.

The other danger is, I think, at least as great, and that would be that the driving force of the real policy-making would tend to fall into the Operations Coordinating Board, which would pay hardly more than lip service to the generalities of the Council's directives and would create policy as it went along. Indeed, any chairman with considerable amount of drive would feel impelled to do so, and his own Executive Director would be judged very largely in terms of the degree to which he "got things done." The result, I am afraid, would be to build up a little empire of the kind that Harry Hopkins represented in the Roosevelt administration of the "do-ers" with an extraordinary tendency to short cut normal channels of consultation or to achieve administrative solutions notable principally for their effects. Sometimes this is a very necessary and valuable part of government, but it can play hob with anything in an area as delicate as national security policy. It would, I think, be particularly dangerous when the duty for follow-up is put on a man as presently overburdened as the present Secretary of State. To be quite bald about the matter, the present Secretary of State functions on an extremely Olympian level. His Under Secretary must run a department of enormous complexity both policy-wise and in terms of executive and administrative controls, although he no doubt devolves a lot of the personnel and organizational matters on Lourie, the other Under Secretary. It seems to me quite impossible that the Under Secretary of State should devote as much of his time as would be necessary to what amounts to the supervision of the broadest programs of the government in their detailed operational aspects, and do a considered job on it. If he devolved them on his Executive Director, this individual would either get too much power or would be met with rebuffs of a most natural order by people who felt that their provinces were being invaded. In short, the scheme seems to me to be asking for trouble.

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I should think that its most serious deficiency would come not just in the personal terms of the ambiguous position in which it would put the Special Assistant of the President for national security affairs, but in the lack of clear lines of responsibility for the formulation and execution of National Security Council policies approved by the President. The least that could be done to make the proposal workable would be to put the Executive Officer of the Board under the direction of the Special Assistant to the President, so that there would be one channel of responsibility for the formation as well as the execution of policies whom the President could hold responsible for all the necessary staff work and follow-up. I suggest, however, that the Under Secretary of State, who would be functioning as a sort of chairman for the Little Cabinet Council for the Security Council, would not be the best person to boss this, even if it is assumed that the State Department is the best agency to head it up. If it is desired to get prestige and a high level appointment in who will also have a foot in one of the principal departments, it might be better to use one of the less burdened Cabinet officials like Harold Stassen, who has some possibilities of free time and whose interests do lie athwart many of the programs of the agencies concerned. Some such effort was certainly contemplated in making Harriman a sort of special assistant to the President for the coordination of foreign economic operations and policy. The difficulty with this job is that it contemplates domestic matters and the whole range of national security policy, which, in effect, just creams off the top of all policies under present conditions, and certainly all policies that affect more than one of the agencies.

Perhaps the best way of attacking the problem is to offer an alternative solution which attempts to accomplish in a balanced way the needs which this proposal attempts to meet. I would set it up as follows:

The National Security Council should contain within its structure an Operations Coordinating Board, of which the Executive Officer should be a deputy to the Special Assistant to the President for national security affairs, with the Secretary responsible to the Executive Secretary of the National Security Council. Its staff should be furnished from the staff which is under the general control of the Special Assistant to the President for national security affairs and the Executive Secretary, although special staff functions might be assigned to a group of these staff members under the specific direction of the Deputy Special Assistant for national security affairs. The members of the Operations Coordinating Board should be the Under Secretary of State, the Deputy Secretary of Defense, the Deputy Director of ODM, the Deputy **Director** for Mutual Security, the Director or the Deputy Director of the Budget Bureau, and the Under Secretary of the Treasury. Alternates

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for special purposes should be either members of the Planning Board or Board Assistants of these agencies. For this purpose, each agency might be allowed at least two Board Assistants so that one would be available for the Planning Board and one would be available for the Operations Coordinating Board. Other regular participants in the Operations Coordinating Board should be the Director of the CIA or his alternate (see above), the Deputy Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff or his alternate (see above), and the Special Assistant to the President (for Cold War planning) and his alternate, who should be, presumably, the head of the Foreign Information Program.

Appropriate representatives of other departments and agencies should attend meetings on an ad hoc basis.

As suggested above, it seems to me that a Cabinet member with marked administrative talents and not too heavy burdens in terms of the size of his program, such as the Director for Mutual Security or perhaps the Director of the Budget, would seem better qualified to become chairman than any of the Under Secretaries of the top departments. There is no reason, indeed, that the Deputy Director of the Office of Defense Mobilization, or even the Director of the ODM, should not fulfill this function, since the ODM has, by statute and Executive Order, the broadest range of coordinating security policies and defense matters connected with mobilization of any of the White House executive staff. In all the area of mobilization problems, it is normal for the Director of the Office of Defense Mobilization to be responsible for this coordination. In any case, if he were not chairman, he should be deputy chairman and should serve for many meetings where more domestic than foreign issues were involved.

It would appear to me to be logical to build up a small staff for the Special Assistant to the President for cold war planning which could call on whatever assistance it needed from the staff of the head of the Foreign Information Program to take into account the special aspects of psychological strategy which appear to me in danger of being lost under the proposed Jackson reorganization plan.

I think this proposal would meet substantially the three problems which are of major import:

1. The need of keeping policy planning and operations for the whole of the National Security Council under a single responsible guidance (that of the Special Assistant to the President for national security affairs), and the staff responsible to a single Executive Secretary under the Special Assistant's general direction.



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2. The next need to be met would be to provide an appropriate nucleus for follow-up on national security policies with the "working team" represented and the lines into the several agencies and departments thoroughly integrated without losing the advantages of the institutional staff of the President in areas of coordination already established by statute and Executive Order.

3. The final point is the retrieving of some emphasis on the special aspects of psychological strategy which it is well to see brought to bear on carrying out policies as well as in their formulation. I am afraid that the Jackson Committee proposal, by trying to "psychologize" everything, is in danger of merely veneering all policies with a thin psychological overlay -- one is tempted to say "eye-wash."

There are many other valuable suggestions in the Jackson Committee report, such as the division of the State Department into a Federal structure both at home and abroad, and useful observations on the contribution of the armed forces on political warfare, which I think are not particularly relevant to our considerations. The suggestions about responsibility for covert activities and the role of the CIA are also useful and well-considered, in the main.

I believe that you might have a real opportunity of assisting the valuable parts of this recommendation, while keeping it within the bounds of the sound basic principles of public administration:

1. Never to separate policy from operations in such a way that the two can follow separate directions under separate control.
2. Never multiply responsibility if you intend to get clarification of policies and adequacy of action within the policy framework.
3. Do not create a third agency to do what two others are not doing when it is possible to straighten out the relations within the agencies concerned and assign responsibility along clear functional lines for each.
4. When you abolish an agency, be careful that the reasons which led to its creation are taken care of in the succeeding "reform and reorganization."

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